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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Detroit, Michigan

**SIX MEMBERS OF "DETROIT THUG LORDZ"
PLEAD GUILTY TO DRUG CHARGES**

Six members and associates of an armed gang in northwest Detroit known as the "Detroit Thug Lordz" or "DTL" entered guilty pleas in federal court today to a variety of felony drug charges, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced. Joining in the announcement was ATF Special Agent-In-Charge Valerie J. Goddard of the Detroit Field Division. This is a TIDE (Tactical Intelligence Driven Enforcement) investigation, lead by ATF and the Detroit Police Department with assistance from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the Michigan State Police (MSP).

The following individuals pleaded guilty before Judge David M. Lawson this afternoon:

- Rodolfo Moreno, 20, of Detroit pleaded guilty to conspiracy to distribute crack cocaine, powder cocaine, and marijuana. Moreno's plea agreement requires a ten-year mandatory minimum sentence of imprisonment and a sentencing range of 262-327 months.
- Nicholas Jaime, a/k/a Kilo, 21, of Detroit pleaded guilty to distributing more than five grams of crack cocaine. Jaime's plea agreement calls for a five-year mandatory minimum and a sentencing range of 87-108 months.
- Hassan Aljibory, 23, of Warren, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to distribute crack cocaine, powder cocaine, and marijuana. Aljibory's plea agreement carries a ten-year mandatory minimum sentence and a sentencing range of 46-57 months.
- Randi Carl Diggs, 19, of Detroit pleaded guilty to distributing crack cocaine and marijuana. He faces 24-30 months imprisonment.
- Michael Moreno, 18, of Detroit pleaded guilty to possession with intent to distribute powder cocaine and marijuana. He faces 12-18 months.

- Shane Aben, 18, of Detroit pleaded guilty to possession of marijuana. He faces 0-6 months imprisonment.

Collectively, the six defendants admitted to distributing crack cocaine, powder cocaine, and marijuana throughout northwest Detroit from May 2, 2006 to February 13, 2007. During this period, the organization maintained drug houses on Woodmont, Lawndale, and Winthrop Streets. Drug sales were accomplished through calls to pre-arranged cellular telephone numbers and deliveries with rented vehicles. Sentencing is scheduled for January 13, 2008.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, "Any organized groups that endanger our neighborhoods by pursuing a gangster's life of drug trafficking and violence should take notice that we are determined to dismantle armed drug gangs and bring them to justice. We will continue our work on these types of priority gang prosecutions."

Special Agent in Charge Valerie Goddard said, "Our focus on gun crime through the Project Safe Neighborhood initiative leads us to dismantle organized drug trafficking organizations like the Detroit Thug Lordz. In the City of Detroit, as with many major metropolitan areas, we know that these small drug organizations fuel violent crime. ATF's strategy is unique and our focus on the gun has proven to be successful in dismantling gangs and providing lengthy Federal prison sentences for repeat and violent offenders."

Three defendants charged in the sixteen-count indictment did not enter guilty pleas today. If convicted following trial, Isaias Quesada, 22, the alleged gang leader, will face a mandatory minimum sentence of 20 years imprisonment. Omar Jay Gladson, 20, and Karen Haskins, 49, will serve mandatory life imprisonment. All three defendants are scheduled for trial later this year.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys David Portelli, Terrence Haugabook, and Leonid Feller.

Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) Operation TIDE is the unprecedented, long-term law enforcement and community collaboration where federal, state, county and local law enforcement officials meet regularly and work in cooperation to reduce violent crimes and prevent recidivism by focusing on the "worst of the worst" in Northwest Detroit, Detroit's largest police district.

Other PSN Operation TIDE Task Force partners include the U.S. Marshals Service, the FBI, the Wayne County Sheriff's Department, the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office, and the Michigan Department of Corrections.

Citizens with information concerning illegal guns, gangs with guns, armed drug trafficking or the trafficking of illegal guns are encouraged to call 800-ATF-GUNS. Callers can remain anonymous. This number is managed and answered by law enforcement, ATF agents who work directly with local police departments. For information about Project Safe Neighborhoods call 1-800-891-8881 or visit www.psnworks.org.